

VZCZCXRO6333
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK RUEHMOS
DE RUEHKU #5030 3401426
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 061426Z DEC 05
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2045
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 005030

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

FOR NEA/ARPI; LONDON FOR TSOU; PARIS FOR ZEYA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/05/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KU](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT SPEAKER PLEASED WITH PREPARATIONS FOR
IRAQ'S DECEMBER 15 ELECTIONS; WELCOMES VICTORY STRATEGY

REF: STATE 216314

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: During a December 5 meeting, Kuwait National Assembly Speaker Jassem Al-Khorafi told the Ambassador he was pleased with Iraqi preparations for December 15 elections and was convinced the Iraqi people intended for the process to be free and fair. Al-Khorafi reported Iraqi concerns about U.S. involvement in the process and said he agreed that some distance was necessary. The Ambassador restated the U.S. wanted a transparent process in which all Iraqis participated, and shared with the Speaker the National Strategy for Victory in Iraq. Al-Khorafi stressed the supportive role to be played by Iraq's neighbors and said he had encouraged Iraqi officials to consult with regional capitals. End Summary.

Iraqis are Ready for Elections

¶2. (C) During a December 5 meeting, Parliament Speaker Jassem Al-Khorafi told the Ambassador that based on his meetings with visiting Iraqi delegations, he was convinced Iraqi political groups were determined to hold fair, transparent elections on December 15. Al-Khorafi noted concerns about "U.S. influence and support for certain candidates," saying the Iraqis do not want any "U.S. interference" in the electoral process. Al-Khorafi added his personal comment that the U.S. does not always "practice what it preaches" so some distance from the December 15 balloting is merited.

¶3. (C) Continuing his comments on preparations for the elections, he said, "we're reaching the end and they (the Iraqi people) are all hopeful." He expressed his "pleasant surprise" that all groups were involved in the electoral process and said they really were doing their best. He was pleased that the groups were also preparing to negotiate political participation if they do not achieve their electoral goals.

Timing was Right for Release of National Iraq Strategy

¶4. (C) The Ambassador disputed Al-Khorafi's characterization of U.S. involvement in the Iraqi elections. He acknowledged the difficulty of the process and the complications resulting from some sectarianism among the security forces. Nonetheless, he emphasized the U.S. sought to ensure a fair process in which all voices were heard. He further reviewed for the Speaker the National Strategy for Victory in Iraq, leaving with Al-Khorafi a copy of the President's November 30 speech and a copy of the strategy (reftel). Al-Khorafi said the President's speech came at the right time, adding that it sent a good, strong message on the

U.S. intention to see Iraq "through until the end." He added the UK Prime Minister Blair's speech was also needed.

Listen to Iraq's Neighbors

15. (C) Commenting on regional support for the Iraqi Transitional Government, Al-Khorafi advised the Ambassador that the U.S. should not depend on the Arab League. He was critical of the recommendation from the recent AL meeting in Cairo to meet in February in Iraq, saying, "we all know the meeting should have been held in Iraq." The Ambassador stressed the importance of the support of Iraq's neighbors and Al-Khorafi concurred, urging the U.S. to heed the concerns of neighboring states. Al-Khorafi also mentioned the advice he had given Iraqi leaders, reporting that he emphasized to Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari that stability in Iraq would promote stability in Iran. He also encouraged the FM to travel to Saudi Arabia and meet with King Abdullah so that information on Iraq had a source other than Saudi FM Prince Saud.

Visit Embassy Kuwait's Classified Website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/>

You can also access this site through the
State Department's Classified SIPRNET website

LEBARON